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AN ACT

For the promoting and propagating the

GOSPEL

OF

Jesus Christ

IN

NEW ENGLAND.

Die Veneris, 27 Julii, 1649.

ORdered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That this Act be forthwith printed and published.

Hen: Scobell, Cleric. Parliament'.

London, Printed for *Edward Husband*, Printer to the Parliament of *England*, and are to be sold at his Shop in Fleetstreet, at the Sign of the Golden-Dragon, near the Inner-Temple, 1649.

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New England.

Whereas the Commons of England assembled in Parliament, have received certain intelligence, by the testimonial of divers faithful and godly Ministers, and others in New-England, That divers the Heathen Natives of that Countrey, through the blessing of God upon the pious care and pains of some godly English of this Nation, who preach the Gospel to them in their own Indian Language, who not onely of Barbarous are become Civil, but many of them forsaking their accustomed Charms and Sorceries, and other Satanical Delusions, do now call upon the Name of the Lord, and give great testimony of the power of God drawing them from

death and darkness, into the like and light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, which appeareth by their diligent attending on the Word so preached unto them, with tears lamenting their mis-spent lives, teaching their Children what they are instructed in themselves, being careful to place their said Children in godly English Families, and to put them to English Schools, betaking themselves to one Wife, putting away the rest, and by their constant prayers to Almighty God morning and evening in their families, expressed (in all appearance) with much Devotion and Zeal of heart: All which considered, We cannot but in behalf of the Nation, represent, rejoyce and give glory to God, for the beginning of so glorious a propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst those poor heathen, which cannot be prosecuted with that expedition and further success as is desired, unless fit instruments be encouraged & maintained to pursue it, universities, schools, and nurseries of literature setled for further instructing and civilizing them, Instruments and Materials fit for labor, and clothing, with other necessaries, as incouragements for the best deserving among them, be provided, and many other things necessary for so great a Work; the furnishing of all which will be a burthen too heavy for the English there (who although willing, yet unable) having in a great measure exhausted their Estates in laying the Foundations of many hopeful Towns and Colonies in a desolate Wilderness; and therefore conceive our selves of this Nation bound to be helpful in the promoting and advancing of a Work so much tending to the honor of Almighty God. Be it therefore Enacted, and it is hereby Enacted by this present Parliament, and by the authority

authority thereof, That for the furthering so good a Work, and for the purposes aforesaid, from henceforth there shall be a Corporation in England constituting of sixteen persons (viz.) a President, Treasurer, and fourteen Assistants; And that William Steel Esq; Harbert Pelham Esq; James Sherley, Abraham Babington, Robert Houghton, Richard Hutchinson, George Dun, Robert Tomson, William Mullins, John Hodgson, Edward Parks, Edward Clud, and Richard Lloyd, Thomas Ares, John Stone, & Edward Winslow, Citizens of London, be the first sixteen persons whereof the said Corporation shall consist; out of whom the said sixteen persons, at such time and place as they shall think fit, by themselves or the greater number of them, shall elect and choose one of the said sixteen persons to be President, and another of them to be the present Treasurer; and that the said sixteen persons, or the greater number of them, shall have power, and are hereby authorized at any time or times, to Elect a new President, Treasurer, or Assistants, so often, and from time to time as any the said President, Treasurer and Assistants shall dye or be amoved; which said President, Treasurer and Assistants for the time being, shall for ever hereafter in name and fact be one Body Politique and Corporate in Law, to all intents and purposes; and shall have perpetual Succession, and shall be called by the name of the President and Society for propagation of the Gospel in New-England; and shall be from time to time Eligible as aforesaid; and by that name they and their Successors shall and may, Without License in Mortmain, Purchase or Acquire to themselves, any Lands, Tenements or Hereditaments in England or Wales, not exceeding the yearly value of Two thousand pounds; and any goods

goods and sums of money whatsoever, to the uses and purposes herein limited and expressed, and sue or plead, and be sued or impleaded by the name aforesaid, in all Courts and places of Judicature in England or Wales: And that the persons of the said Corporation, or any nine of them, shall have power, and are hereby authorized when they shall think fit, to make and appoint a common Seal for the use of the said Corporation; and from time to time to meet and choose such Officers, and make such allowance to them, and them also to remove, and after death or removal, to choose such others; and to make from time to time such Orders and By-Laws, for the better ordering and carrying on of this Work, as they shall think fit; and also to make conclusive bargains for Lands and Tenements, to be purchased by the said Corporation for valuable consideration. And for the better ordering of the Government of the said Corporation, Be it enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the President or Treasurer, and four or more Assistants, shall and may from time to time, upon summons from the President or Treasurer, hold a meeting for the debating & concluding of affairs concerning the collecting & bringing in the profits and revenues (to the said Corporation accrewing) into their Treasury; and for direction in all emergent occasions, execution of all Orders & By-Laws, and for summons of a general meeting of all the society, as the cause shall require: In all which the conclusion shall be made by the said President or Treasurer, and the said Assistants, or the major part of them, the said President or Treasurer, and Assistants so meeting, & that they shall and may adjourn their meeting from time to time, as shall be by them deemed most expedient. And it is

Enacted

Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New-England in New-England for the time being, by themselves or such as they shall appoint, shall have hereby Power and Authority to receive and dispose of the moneys brought in and paid to the said Treasurer for the time being, or any other moneys, goods and commodities, acquired and delivered by the care of the said Corporation at any time; whose Receipt, or the Receipts of such person and persons so authorized by them, shall be a sufficient discharge to the said Corporation and Treasurer; which said Commissioners are hereby ordered and appointed, to dispose of the said moneys in such maner as shall best and principally conduce to the preaching and propagating of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst the Natives; and also for maintaining of Schools and Nurseries of Learning, for the better education of the children of the Natives: And forasmuch as We cannot but be induced from the consideration of the premises, to recommend the furthering thereof to the charity of all such whose hearts God shall incline thereunto, by their Christian and Charitable contributions, to be as the Foundation of so pious and great an undertaking; Be it therefore, and it is hereby Enacted by the Parliament assembled, and by the authority thereof, That a general Collection be made for the purposes aforesaid, in and through all the Counties, Cities, Towns and Parishes of England and Wales: And for the more speedy and better effecting thereof, Be it Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the several Ministers within the said several places, are hereby required to read this Act or a copy thereof, in the presence of their several Congregations, upon the next Lords day after the same shall be delivered

unto

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unto them, and to exhort the people to a chearful and liberal contribution, and are to give their best assistance to so pious a Work; and the Ministers and Church-Wardens, or Overseers of the poor of every such parish and place, together with such other Well-affected persons as God shall stir up to be active in such an undertaking, and as shall be nominated and approved by the Minister for that purpose, are hereby authorized after the reading hereof, to go with all convenient speed from house to house, to every of the Inhabitants of the said Parishes and places respectively, and to take the subscription of every such person in a schedule to be presented by them for that purpose, and accordingly at the same time to collect and gather the same; a Duplicate whereof, as also the money so to be collected, shall be paid within ten days after the Collection so made, into the hands of persons of quality resident in each county, specially deputed by the said Corporation under their common Seal, to be Treasurers for the receiving of the same; and the names of such respective Treasurers, shall be notified in Writing to every place wheresoever such Collection is to be made; and the Receipt under the hand of such respective Treasurer so appointed and authorized, shall be a sufficient discharge for the said several Ministers, Church-Wardens, and Overseers, for the Collection by them paid. Provided always, That this Act, or any thing therein contained, shall not be construed to extend to the enabling or allowing of Transportation of any Gold, Silver, Plate, Bullion, Money, or other Commodities inhibited by the Laws and Statutes of this Nation, other or otherwise then according to the said Laws and Statutes, and the true sence and meaning of them.

Hen: Scobell, Cleric. Parliamenti.

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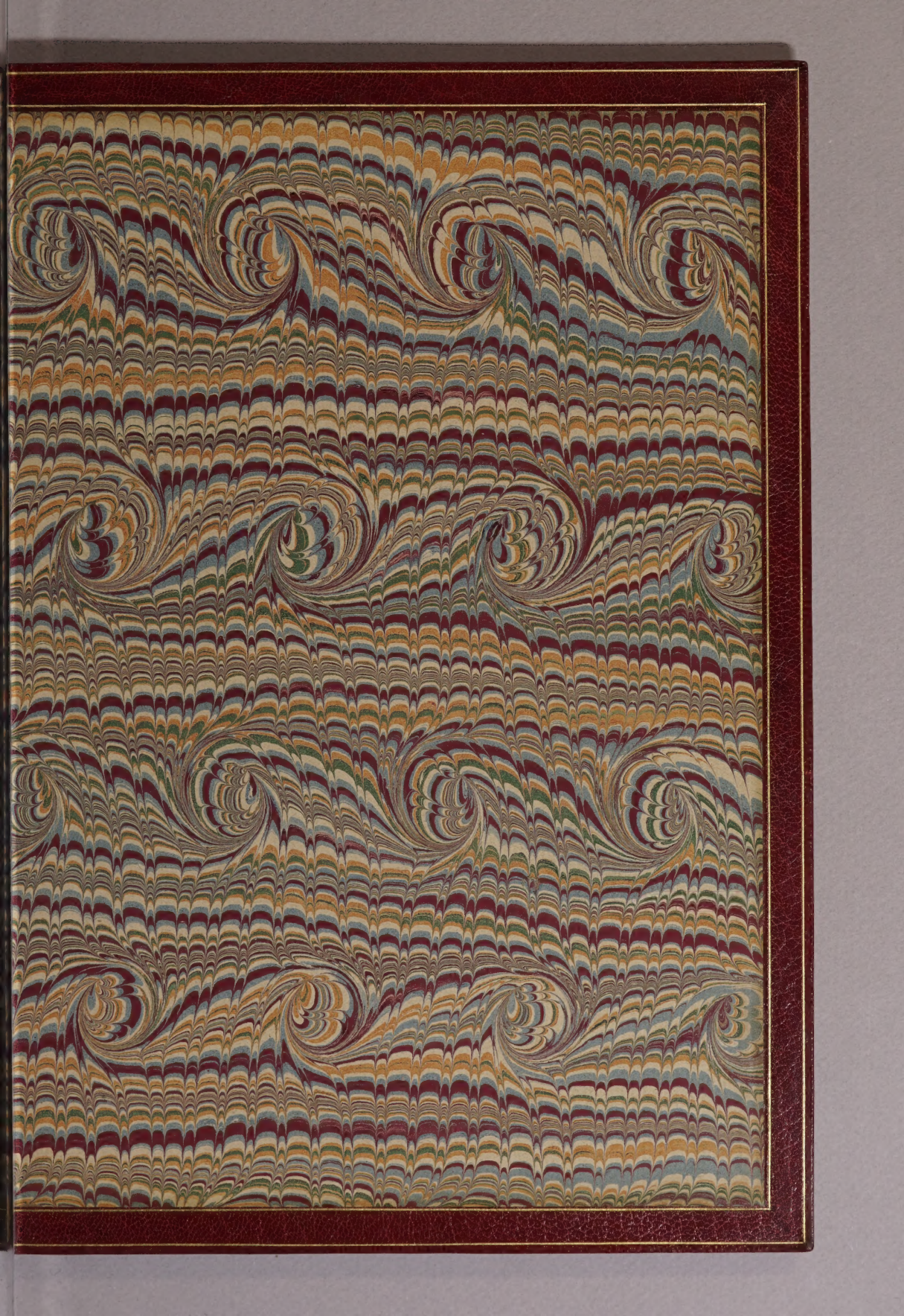
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